

Appl. No. 09/756,427
Reply to Office Action of January 13, 2006

REMARKS

This Response is being filed in reply to the final Office Action dated January 13, 2005, issued in the above-identified application. Presently, claims 1-25 are pending in the application. With this Response, claims 1, 14-16 and 24-25 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by any of the amendments made to the claims. Therefore, entry and favorable reconsideration are respectfully requested.

I. Response To Claim Rejections

Claims 1-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,321,983 issued to Katayanagi et al. (hereafter, "Katayanagi"). The Applicant respectfully traverses the above rejections for the following reasons.

To expedite prosecution, the Applicant has herein amended independent claims 1, 14-16 and 24-25 to further distinguish the present invention from Katayanagi. In particular, the independent claims have been amended to more particularly point out that the information processing apparatus of the present invention includes the use of a guarantee card functional component module that allows for reading and writing product history information related to an electronic apparatus.

More specifically, the present invention as recited in independent claims 1, 14-16 and 24-25 is directed to an information processing apparatus, method, system and computer-readable medium that enables product history information to be read from and written to a guarantee card of an electronic device. Each apparatus in the system has installed in a memory location a guarantee card functional component module (FCM), which can be used for accessing the electronic card stored in the non-volatile memory of an electronic device. The guarantee card includes purchase information or repair information related to the electronic apparatus. Support for the above features can be found at least on page 22 of the Applicant's application. Additionally, Katayanagi does not appear to disclose these features.

In contrast, Katayanagi discloses a method and system for managing the overall life cycle of a product from its manufacture to its destruction or recycling that includes the use of an electronic tagging technology. The typical electronic tag can be an IC card, an optomagnetic recording medium, a barcode label or the like. The electronic tag is attached to the product when it is manufactured and contains integrated circuitry for writing information to and reading

Appl. No. 09/756,427

Reply to Office Action of January 13, 2006

information from the tag. Although the information read from and written to the tags may include repair information, the tagging technology disclosed does not include the use of a guarantee card FCM. Instead, in Katayanagi, the tag and the tag reader must be compatible so that automatic communication can occur when the tag and the tag reader come within a certain range of each other. Thus, there would be no need for a guarantee card FCM to perform as an application programming interface. Conversely, the information processing apparatus of the present invention utilizes a guarantee card FCM that acts as an application programming interface between the information processing apparatus and any electronic device. The advantage is that application programs do not have to consider the difference between devices connected in the system. (See, Applicant's application, page 22).

Additionally, Katayanagi discloses the use of external databases connected to the system via a network for storing information regarding the product history of a particular device. (See, Katayanagi, Col. 6, lines 56-59). Therefore, there would be no need to have an information processing apparatus with a control-information identification/storage means, as in the claimed invention.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 14-16 and 24-25 (as amended) are believed to be distinguishable over Katayanagi for at least the reasons noted above. Likewise, dependent claims 2-13, and 17-23 are also believed to be distinguishable over Katayanagi based on their respective dependencies on claims 1 and 16.

To date, Applicants do not believe that they have received initialed copies of the PTO-1449 form submitted with each of Applicants' previously-submitted IDS on September 29, 2004 and June 13, 2003. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request a copy of each of the initialed PTO 1449 forms acknowledging entry of the references cited therein for examination purposes.

Appl. No. 09/756,427

Reply to Office Action of January 13, 2006

II. Conclusion

In light of the above, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-25 are both novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. The Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818.

Respectfully submitted,

BY 

Thomas C. Basso

Reg. No. 46,541

Customer No. 29175

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